



The materials included in this kit are provided by the ***Get Smart Virginia: Know When Antibiotics Work*** campaign.

The campaign aims to raise awareness among both the general public and healthcare providers about the dangers associated with inappropriate antibiotic use. The Virginia PTA participates in the statewide coalition formed to address this problem. As part of its leadership in and commitment to public education, the Virginia PTA is helping to disseminate educational materials to its members.

The materials in this kit can be used during Antibiotic Awareness Month and during health activities and programs. We encourage you share this information with parents, staff and students in your schools. These materials may also be obtained in their electronic format from the VDH website: www.vdh.virginia.gov/epi/getsmart/index.asp

If you have any questions or would like more information about the Get Smart Virginia project, you can reach us at 804-864-8106.

Kate Grant, MS
Project Director
Virginia Department of Health
kate.grant@vdh.virginia.gov

Cartoon characters appear courtesy of the Wisconsin Antibiotic Resistance Network (WARN). Find the Antibiotics, Get Well Word Find and Antibiotic Word Scramble are adapted from materials ©2002 Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care. All rights reserved. (Used with permission.) "Antibiotic Maze" is the copyrighted property of the Arkansas Foundation for Medical Care, and may not be reproduced, published, broadcast or distributed without express written permission from AFMC.

Project Overview

Antibiotic resistance is growing.

Resistant bacteria are bacteria not killed by the usual doses of antibiotics. Resistant bacteria emerge because of antibiotic overuse or misuse. Once bacteria develop resistance to an antibiotic, they can continue to live and/or multiply even in the presence of antibiotic treatment. Prior to 1988, more than 99% of all bacterial infections caused by *Strep pneumoniae* bacteria were effectively treated with penicillin. Because of antibiotic overuse, the level of resistant infections in the US has increased to 30%. In addition, one-third of those resistant infections are highly resistant, forcing doctors to use 'last resort' antibiotics to treat them. High-level resistance to penicillin was extremely rare just eight years ago.

According to the CDC, up to 50% of antibiotic use may be inappropriate. Most of this inappropriate use is for illness due to viruses, which antibiotics cannot cure. Antibiotic resistant bacteria cause infections that are more difficult to treat, result in longer and costlier hospitalizations, and must be treated with stronger antibiotics that may cause side effects that are more serious.

We cannot depend on a ready supply of newly created, stronger antibiotics. Time and money make the discovery and creation of new antibiotics a difficult and time-consuming process. It is very important to do what we can to slow resistance now. The best way to do that is to stop inappropriate antibiotic use.

Habits that lead to inappropriate antibiotic use include:

- Insisting on a prescription for an antibiotic when your doctor says no,
- Not taking your prescribed antibiotic for the full course of treatment,
- Using antibiotics without a doctor's care or using leftover antibiotics.

Decreasing inappropriate antibiotic use is the best way to stop antibiotic resistance.

The Virginia Department of Health has initiated a long-term, statewide effort to promote the appropriate use of antibiotics called, ***Get Smart Virginia: Know When Antibiotics Work.***

This campaign is a partnership that includes physician organizations, healthcare providers, health systems, health plans, public health agencies, consumer and community based health organizations, federal, state and local government representatives and the pharmaceutical industry.

Our goal is to reduce the inappropriate use of antibiotics and inhibit the spread of antibiotic resistance. We will accomplish this through education efforts geared to healthcare providers and consumers.

For more information on ***Get Smart Virginia***, contact: Kate Grant, kate.grant@vdh.virginia.gov

Facts about Infections and Children

- School children get 3-8 viral infections each year, more than 10 when in childcare.
- Yellow or green mucous **does not** mean that a child has a bacterial infection; it is a normal response to a cold.
- Ear infections do not always need an antibiotic. Doctors now recommend 'watchful waiting' for fluid in the middle ear.
- Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent infections.
- Children who frequently take antibiotics may develop resistant bacteria in their nose and throats.

Facts about Antibiotics and Respiratory Tract Infections

- Acute respiratory tract infections include sinusitis, bronchitis, sore throat and common colds.
- Antibiotics do not work for respiratory tract infections because viruses cause these infections.
- Only bacteria cause a small percentage of respiratory tract infections, and these often will get better on their own, too.
- Respiratory infections may last for two to three weeks before you feel well.
- Taking antibiotics when you don't need them causes bacteria to become resistant to the antibiotic.

Did You Know...

- 1,000 times as many germs are spread from damp hands than dry hands.
- A 1mm hair follicle can hold 50,000 germs.
- Nearly 22 million school days are lost each year to the common cold.
- Bacteria can double in numbers every 20 minutes. That means a single bacterium on a kitchen counter can multiply to more than 34 billion in just 12 hours.
- Rhinovirus, the most common cause of colds can live on surfaces such as, tables, doorknobs and computer keyboards for 2-3 hours.
- Hand washing is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of disease.
- Number of germs per square inch:
 - Phone – 25,127
 - Toilet seat -- 49

Newsletter Article

When your child is sick, you want to do everything you can to help. But antibiotics are not the answer for every illness. This information will help you know when antibiotics work – and when they won't.

Antibiotics Aren't Always the Answer

Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of germs: bacteria and viruses. Antibiotics can cure bacterial infections – ***not viral infections***.

- Bacteria cause strep throat, some ear infections and pneumonia. Antibiotics can work.
- Viruses cause the common cold, most coughs, bronchitis and the flu. Antibiotics don't work.

Using antibiotics for a virus:

- Will NOT cure the infection
- Will NOT help your child feel better
- Will NOT keep others from catching your child's illness.

Protect Your Child, Give the Best Care

Antibiotics should not be used to treat the common cold, runny noses and most coughs. Children fight off these viral illnesses on their own. If your child's doctor or health care provider prescribes an antibiotic to treat a bacterial infection – like strep throat – be sure to give your child all of the medicine. Only using part of the medicine means that only part of the illness has been treated. Not finishing the medicine can cause resistant bacteria to develop and grow.

How Do I Know if My Child has a Virus or a Bacterial Infection?

Ask your child's doctor or health care provider and follow his or her advice on what to do about your child's illness. Remember, colds are caused by viruses and should not be treated with antibiotics.

Does This Mean I Should Never Give My Child Antibiotics?

Antibiotics are very strong medicines and should be used to treat bacterial infections. Your doctor or health care provider will prescribe antibiotics if your child has a bacterial infection.

If Mucus from the Nose Changes from Clear to Yellow or Green -- Does This Mean That my Child Needs an Antibiotic?

Yellow or green mucus does not mean that your child has a sinus infection. It is normal for the mucus to get thick and change color during a viral cold.

The Risk: Bacteria Becomes Resistant

What's the harm in giving your child antibiotics anytime? Taking antibiotics when they are not needed can cause some bacteria to become resistant to the antibiotic. These resistant bacteria are stronger and harder to kill. They can stay in your child's body and can cause severe illnesses that can't be cured with antibiotic medicines. A cure for resistant bacteria may require stronger treatment – and possibly a stay in the hospital.

To help prevent antibiotic resistance, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends giving your child antibiotics only when necessary. For more information talk to your health care provider or visit: www.cdc.gov/getsmart or 1-888-246-2675.

ABC...

What You Should Know About Using Antibiotics

Antibiotics are lifesaving drugs, but they are not always the answer.

Antibiotics have been one of the most important medicines in the war against disease in the last fifty years. The proper use of antibiotics has protected us against infections and illnesses, such as tuberculosis, which in years past caused death and suffering. However, antibiotics are not always the answer.

Bacteria and Viruses

Two types of germs, bacteria and viruses, are the main cause of infections. Viruses cause most coughs, colds, bronchitis and sore throats.

- ❖ Antibiotics do not have any effect against illnesses caused by a virus.
- ❖ ***Only illnesses caused by bacteria can be treated with antibiotics.***

PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY AGAINST DRUG RESISTANT BACTERIA

- Use antibiotics only when your doctor prescribes them.
- Don't share antibiotics with family members.
- When an antibiotic is prescribed, complete the entire prescription.

Careful use prevents drug resistant bacteria

When we take an antibiotic, the first doses kill off the weaker bacteria, and we begin to feel better. The stronger bacteria continue to survive. If we stop taking the antibiotic before the prescription is finished, the remaining bacteria multiply and become resistant to the antibiotic.

The resistant bacteria can be transmitted to other family members and the community.

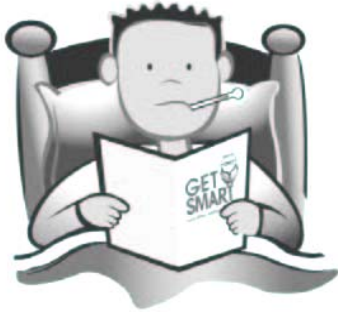
When a person is infected with drug resistant bacteria, he or she may need to be treated with a stronger antibiotic and it may take longer to get better. For more information talk to your health care provider or call 804-864-8106 or visit:

www.vdh.virginia.gov/epi/getsmart/index.asp



Cough, Sniffle, Sneeze

No Antibiotics Please



**Antibiotics Can Cure Many Infections But
Using Antibiotics for a Viral Illness...**

WILL not cure you
WILL not help you feel better
WILL not stop the spread to others

When You Have a Viral Illness:

- Wash your hands often to stop the spread of the illness
- Drink plenty of fluids, water and juices
- Get extra rest
- Use saline nose drops for a stuffy nose
- Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen as needed for pain or fever

Help Prevent "Superbugs"

Most illnesses are caused by two kinds of germs: bacteria and viruses. Antibiotics cure illness caused by ***bacteria***. They don't help colds, the flu, sore throats, bronchitis and earaches.

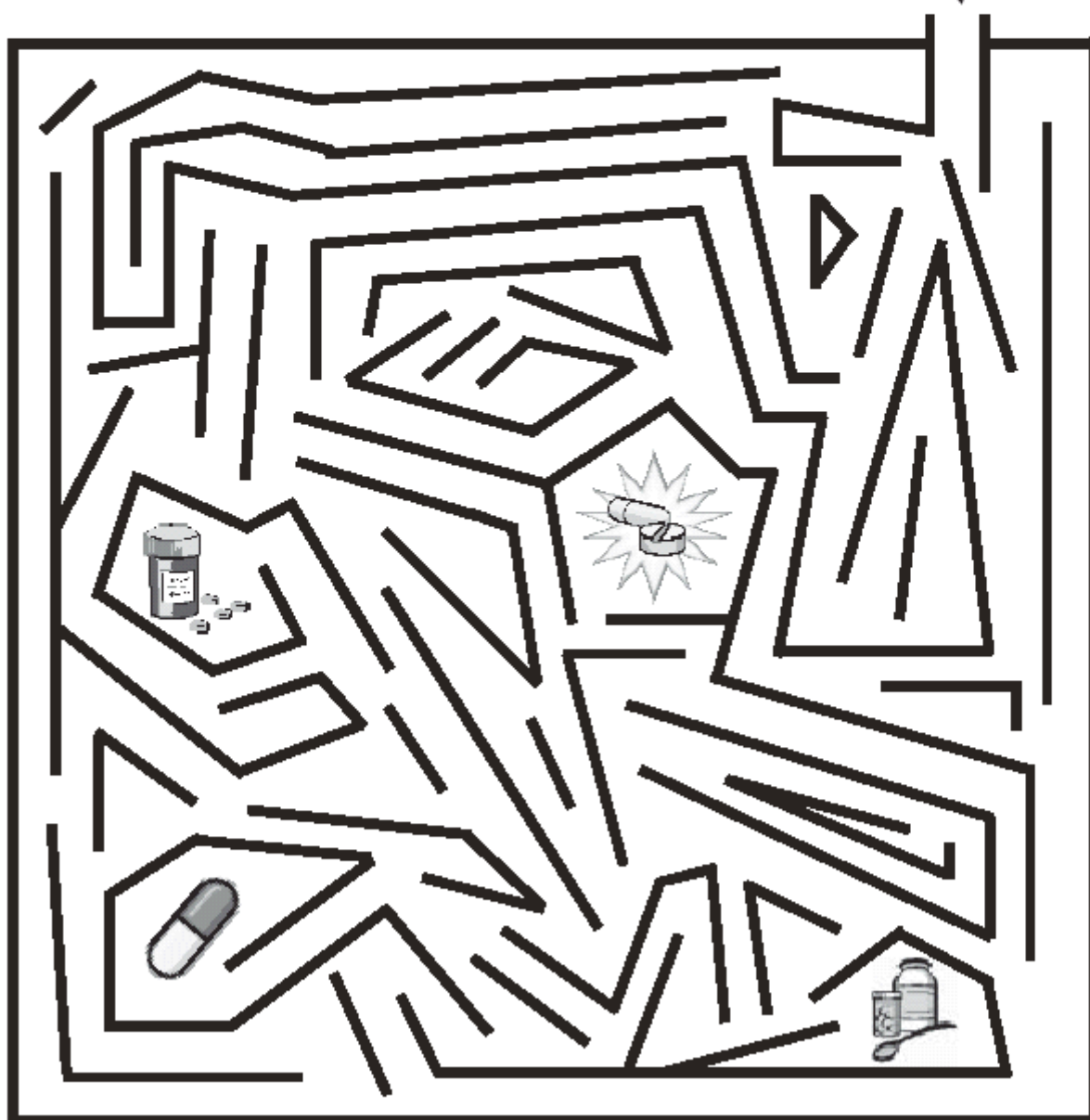
- Never take an antibiotic for a viral illness
- When you take antibiotics always finish the medicine
- Never save or share your antibiotics
- Let your doctor decide if you need an antibiotic

Find the Antibiotics

Billy needs to take all of his medicine to make sure his infection is gone. Help him find all of his antibiotics so he can get well!

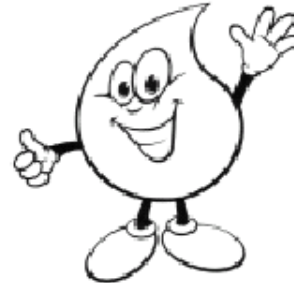


Start here



Antibiotic Word Scramble

Unscramble the words below and help antibiotics do their job against bacteria (not viruses!).



- 1) DTRCOO _____
- 2) GOHUC _____
- 3) TRICABAE _____
- 4) SLDOC _____
- 5) BATNIIOCIT _____
- 6) LTEAHYH _____
- 7) MERG _____
- 8) KSCI _____
- 9) NCESISRETA _____
- 10) HAWS ORUY SNDAH! _____

Solution: Antibiotic Word Scramble

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------|
| 1. doctor | 5. antibiotic |
| 2. cough | 4. colds |
| 3. bacteria | |
| 6. healthy | 3. bacteria |
| 7. germ | 2. cough |
| 8. sick | |
| 9. resistance | 1. doctor |
| 10. Wash your hands! | 5. antibiotic |

Washing your hands keeps infections away!



Some Suggested Ideas to Promote Antibiotic Awareness Month

- Share the enclosed education materials with parents and students during Back-to-School Night. [Parent handouts included, Snort Sniffle Sneeze and What you should know about using antibiotics]
- Share this information with teachers and invite Stan the Superbug to your school.
- Have a poster contest about germs and ways to prevent respiratory illnesses.
- Include information about appropriate antibiotic use in your PTA newsletter. [Sample included]
- Send out a press release. [Sample included]
- Design a bulletin board to display antibiotic resistance facts at your school.

SAMPLE

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(DATE, YEAR)

Contact: (NAME, TITLE)
(ORGANIZATION)
(E-MAIL ADDRESS)

**(NAME OF PTA GROUP) EDUCATES MEMBERS
DURING AWARENESS WEEK**

Growing antibiotic resistance a concern to parents across the state

(CITY, STATE) – The Virginia Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is participating in the ***Get Smart Virginia*** campaign to educate parents and students about the growing problem of resistance to antibiotic medications.

(NAME OF LOCAL PTA) is delivering key messages to its members during Antibiotic Awareness Week about a problem that is threatening public health in Virginia. "We see this issue as an extension of our core mission to inform and educate our members on topics which impact the health of students," said (NAME AND TITLE OF LOCAL PTA PRESIDENT).

(NAME OF LOCAL PTA) will deliver three key messages to its members: antibiotics do not work for viral infections like coughs, colds and the flu; if an antibiotic is prescribed by your doctor finish the entire prescription even if you are feeling better; never share or take leftover antibiotics. Confusion about when and how to use antibiotics is one of the main reasons for conducting this education campaign.

Statistics indicate the misuse of antibiotics is widespread and is a serious health risk. According to the Virginia Department of Health, penicillin-type antibiotics do not work for one out of three people who receive them.

The inappropriate use of antibiotics is causing infections that are more difficult to treat, result in longer and costlier hospitalizations, and cases that must be treated with stronger antibiotics that may cause more serious side effects.

"Children pass germs to each other in the classroom, on playground equipment, and when they cough or sneeze," said (NAME AND TITLE OF LOCAL PTA PRESIDENT). But parents need to realize that giving a child an antibiotic for a viral infection may be doing more harm than good. It is not uncommon for children to get 8 viral infections each year. Antibiotics are not necessary for these infections and won't help the child feel better or stop the spread of the infection."

The VA PTA is an active partner with the Get Smart Virginia campaign. Get Smart Virginia is a statewide collaboration of healthcare and consumer organizations mobilizing communities to promote the appropriate use of antibiotics.

###

Antibiotic Resistance Websites

Do Bugs Need Drugs <http://www.dobugsneeddrugs.org/index.html>

The Microbe Zoo <http://commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/dlc-me/zoo/>

Microbes in the News <http://commtechlab.msu.edu/sites/dlc-me/news/news.html>

What Doesn't Kill Them Makes Them Stronger <http://whyfiles.org/038badbugs/>

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention www.cdc.gov/getsmart

Council for Affordable Quality Healthcare www.caqh.org/antibioticsinfo.

Hand Hygiene Websites

Clean Hands Campaign www.washup.org

Henry the Hand www.henrythehand.com

WE'D LIKE YOUR FEEDBACK!!!

Was your school able to use some of the materials found in the Antibiotic Resistance kit?

No_____ Yes_____

If yes, what activities did you use? Circle all that apply.

Newsletter article Parent Handouts Press Release Poster Contest

Guest Speaker Bulletin Board Student Materials Stan the Superbug Program

Were the suggested ideas and activities easy to understand and follow?

No_____ Yes_____

Overall, did you find this information helpful? No_____ Yes_____

What was the most helpful thing about the kit?

What other information about antibiotic resistance would be useful to add to this kit?

Name: _____

PTA Unit/School: _____

Please fax this form to 804-864-8102

Questions?

Call or email Kate Grant, Get Smart Virginia, at 804-864-8106 or email
kate.grant@vdh.virginia.gov

